

REMARKS

Claims 1-61, 64-66, 68-77, 79-84, 86-134 and 136-140 were pending in this application.

Claims 1-3, 7-61, 64-66, 68-77, 79-84 and 86-132 were allowed.

Claims 4-6, 133, 134 and 136-140 were rejected.

Claims 4-6, 133, 134, 136, 137, 138, 139 and 140 have been amended.

Applicant and the undersigned thank Examiner Thompson for his careful review of this application. Consideration of the present application in light of the above-amendments to the claims and in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

THE REJECTION OF CLAIMS 4-6, 138, 139, AND 140 IN VIEW OF RABE:

Claims 4-6, 138, 139, and 140 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. 4,779,445 ("Rabe"). The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Rabe discloses a sleeve to tube expander device in which a tubular sleeve 14 is positioned completely within a tube 12. Portions of the tube 12 and sleeve 14 may then be radially expanded and plastically deformed at the same time by a tool.

Claim 4, as amended, among other things, requires that "... positioning only a portion of the second tubular member within a portion of the first tubular member; radially expanding the portion of the second tubular member into contact with the portion of the first tubular member; and radially expanding the portions of the first and second tubular members; wherein the interior diameter of the radially expanded portion

of the second tubular member is substantially equal to the interior diameter of the radially unexpanded remaining portion of the first tubular member."

By contrast, the sleeve 14 of Rabe is positioned completely within the tube 12. Thus, Rabe does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 4, as amended.

Claim 5, as amended, among other things, requires that "...positioning only a portion of the second tubular member within a portion of the first tubular member; radially expanding the portion of the second tubular member into contact with the portion of the first tubular member; and radially expanding the portions of the first and second tubular members; wherein the interior diameter of the radially expanded portion of the second tubular member is substantially equal to the interior diameter of the radially unexpanded remaining portion of the first tubular member."

By contrast, the sleeve 14 of Rabe is positioned completely within the tube 12. Thus, Rabe does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 5, as amended.

Claim 6, as amended, among other things, requires that "...a second tubular member overlapping with and coupled to only the lower portion of the first tubular member."

By contrast, the sleeve 14 of Rabe is positioned completely within the tube 12. Thus, Rabe does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 6, as amended.

Claim 138, as amended, among other things, requires that "...positioning only a portion of the second tubular member within the first tubular member."

By contrast, the sleeve 14 of Rabe is positioned completely within the tube 12. Thus, Rabe does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 138, as amended.

Claim 139, as amended, among other things, requires that "...positioning only a portion of the second tubular member within the first tubular member."

By contrast, the sleeve 14 of Rabe is positioned completely within the tube 12. Thus, Rabe does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 139, as amended.

Claim 140, as amended, among other things, requires that "...only a portion of a second tubular member overlapping with and coupled to the lower portion of the first tubular member."

By contrast, the sleeve 14 of Rabe is positioned completely within the tube 12. Thus, Rabe does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 140, as amended.

THE REJECTION OF CLAIMS 133, 134, 136 AND 137 IN VIEW OF SAUNDERS:

Claims 133, 134, 136, and 137 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. 1,225,005 ("Saunders"). The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Saunders discloses a well casing, in Fig. 7, in which adjacent casing sections overlap with one another. An overlapping portion 3e of one casing section has the same inside diameter as the remaining portion of the one casing section. An overlapping portion 3f of another casing section has a smaller inside diameter than the remaining portion of the other casing section. There is no disclosure or suggestion within Saunders of radially expanding any of the casing sections. Furthermore, the inside diameter of the overlapping portion 3f of the other casing section is not substantially equal to the inside diameter of the remaining portion of the one casing section.

Claim 133, as amended, among other things, requires that "... positioning the first tubular member into a wellbore; positioning the second tubular member into the wellbore; positioning at least a portion of the second tubular member within the first tubular member; radially expanding at least a portion of the second tubular member into contact with the first tubular member; and radially expanding the first and second tubular members; wherein the interior diameter of the radially expanded second tubular member is substantially equal to the interior diameter of the radially unexpanded portion of the first tubular member."

By contrast, Saunders does not disclose radial expansion of any of the casing sections within a wellbore. Furthermore, the inside diameter of the overlapping portion 3f of the other casing section is not substantially equal to the inside diameter of the remaining portion of the one casing section. Thus, Saunders does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 133, as amended.

Claim 134, as amended, among other things, requires that "...wherein the interior diameter of the upper portion of the first tubular member and the interior diameter of the overlapping portion of the second tubular member are substantially equal."

By contrast, the inside diameter of the overlapping portion 3f of the other casing section of Saunders is not substantially equal to the inside diameter of the remaining portion of the one casing section. Thus, Saunders does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 134, as amended.

Claim 136, as amended, among other things, requires that "... radially expanding the portion of the second tubular member into contact with the first tubular member; and radially expanding the first and second tubular members; wherein the interior diameter

of the radially expanded second tubular member is substantially equal to the interior diameter of the radially unexpanded portion of the first tubular member."

By contrast, Saunders does not disclose radial expansion of any of the casing sections within a wellbore. Furthermore, the inside diameter of the overlapping portion 3f of the other casing section is not substantially equal to the inside diameter of the remaining portion of the one casing section. Thus, Saunders does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 136, as amended.

Claim 137, as amended, among other things, requires that "...the interior diameter of the upper portion of the first tubular member and the interior diameter of the overlapping portion of the second tubular member are substantially equal."

By contrast, the inside diameter of the overlapping portion 3f of the other casing section of Saunders is not substantially equal to the inside diameter of the remaining portion of the one casing section. Thus, Saunders does not disclose or suggest the invention of claim 137, as amended.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Applicant notes with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter for claims 1-3, 7, 21-25, 28, 61, 64-66, 68-77, 79-84, 86-94, 99-120, 124-129, 131, 132, 135, 141, and 142.

CONCLUSION

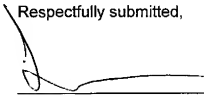
The foregoing is submitted as a full and complete Response to the Final Office Action mailed October 11, 2007. Applicant has made a diligent effort to advance the prosecution of the application by submitting arguments in support of the patentability of pending claims 1-61, 64-66, 68-77, 79-84, 86-134 and 136-140. Applicant has not acquiesced to any rejection and reserves the right to address the patentability of any additional claim features in the future.

In view of the above, reconsideration of the rejections of claims 4-6, 8-20, 26, 27, 95-98, 121-123, 130, 133, 134 and 136-140 is respectfully requested.

As the three-month statutory period for reply expires on January 11, 2007, this Response is therefore considered timely filed and no fees are believed to be due. However, should the Examiner deem any fees as being due, including any fees for any extensions of time, the Examiner is hereby authorized to debit said fees from, or to credit any overpayments to, USPTO Deposit Account Number 50-3786, Reference No. 14147.105025.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned via telephone at the number listed below if a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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